

**THE
URBAN DISTRICT OF SKELMERSDALE**

Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1959



**THE
URBAN DISTRICT OF SKELMERSDALE**

Annual Report

 **of the**

Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1959

SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1959

Chairman A. Davies

Vice-Chairman J. Cadwell

Chairman of the Health Committee T. Moston

E. BERRY

J. CADWELL

A. DAVIES

H. EDDEN

T. A. FARRIMOND

W. J. FENNEY

W. B. GREGSON

H. HARDMAN

J. T. LATHAM

W. MIDDLEHURST

A. H. MORGAN

T. PYE

J. SHARROCK

J. T. WAREING

Medical Officer of Health :

J. GORDON HAILWOOD, M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H. (Part-time).

(Divisional Medical Officer, Lancashire County Council).

Public Health Inspector : ALBERT LAVELLE

A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H., Cert. I., Hsg.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the health of Skelmersdale during 1959.

The general health of the residents of Skelmersdale remained satisfactory during the year. Only three cases of infectious disease was notified and this is in keeping with the low incidence of infectious disease in the district since the war.

The birth rate was 16.5 per 1,000 population which is a satisfactory increase on the rate of 14 in the previous year, which is the same as the general birth rate for England and Wales, which was also 16.5.

The general death rate showed an increase to 15.7 per 1,000 population compared with 12.4 in the previous year. The infant mortality rate was 28.6 per 1,000 live births, an increase on the figure of 22 in the previous year, but in actual numbers there were 3 infant deaths against 2 in 1958, and all 3 infants died within the first month of life and were probably unavoidable. There were again no maternal deaths.

Housing conditions continued to improve. 54 new houses were built during the year, while 24 were dealt with under the Housing Act as being unfit for human habitation. It is interesting to note that 385 houses were rendered fit by the repair of defects following action by the Health Committee.

The Public Health Inspector maintained his high standard of work. He made 1,701 visits to inspect houses under the Public Health and Housing Acts and 447 other visits.

Finally, I would thank the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their interest and support during the year and the members of the staff for their ready help and co-operation at all times.

I am, your Obedient Servant,

J. G. HAILWOOD,

Medical Officer of Health.

June, 1960.

Area of the District 1,942 acres.

Resident population (Registrar General's estimate at mid-1959): 6,370

Number of inhabited houses according to Rate Books at end of 1959: 2,143

Rateable Value: £44,288

Sum represented by a penny rate: £156

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1959

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births	57	48	105
Live birth rate per 1,000 population	—	—	16.5
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	—	—	2.8
Still Births	1	—	1
Still birth rate per 1,000 live and still births	—	—	9.4
Total Live and Still Births	58	48	106
Deaths	45	34	79
Death rate per 1,000 population	—	—	15.7
Infant Deaths	1	2	3
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	—	—	28.6
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births legitimate	—	—	28.6
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births illegitimate	—	—	—
Neo-natal mortality rate per 1,000 live births (first four weeks)	—	—	28.6
Early Neo-natal mortality rate per 1,000 live births (first week)	—	—	9.5
Perinatal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births (still births and deaths under 1 week combined)	—	—	18.9
Maternal deaths (including abortion) ...	—	—	—
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births	—	—	—

NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS

Births

There were 105 births registered in the Urban District during the year, of which 57 were male and 48 female and including 3 illegitimate births, 1 male and 2 females. The adjusted birth rate per 1,000 population (mid 1959) (comparability factor 1.00) was 16.5 compared with 14.9 in 1958.

Deaths

The total number of deaths registered in the Urban District during the year was 79, of this number 45 were male and 34 female. This was an increase of 17 on the figure for 1958. The crude death rate for the year was 12.4 per 1,000 population. The adjusted death rate (comparability factor 1.27) was 15.7 per 1,000 population compared with 12.4 in 1958.

Infant Mortality

There were no deaths during the year due to Zymotic or Epidemic diseases. There were 3 deaths of infants under 1 year, an infantile mortality rate of 28.6 per 1,000 live births.

Maternal Mortality

The Maternal Mortality rate per 1,000 births (live and still) was nil. The figure for England and Wales was 0.38. No maternal deaths occurred in the district during the year.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT 1959

Causes of Death:	Male	Female
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	—	—
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
Syphilitis Disease	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Meningococcal Infections	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—
Measles	—	—
Other infective or parasite diseases	—	—
Cancer	10	4
Diabetes	—	3
Vascular lesions of nervous system	7	3
Heart diseases	14	13
Other Circulatory diseases	1	—
Influenza	—	1
Pneumonia	2	5
Bronchitis	2	1
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	—
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	—	—
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	—	—
Hyperplasia of prostate	2	—
Pregnancy, childbirth abortion	—	—
Congenital malformations	1	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	2	3
Motor vehicle accidents	1	—
All other accidents	1	—
Suicide	—	—
Homicide and Operations of War	—	—
TOTALS	45	34

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICE FOR THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens of a simple nature, throat swabs, etc., are sent for examination at the E.M.S. Pathological Laboratory at the Ormskirk County Hospital. All other specimens are sent to the City Laboratories, Liverpool.

Ambulance Facilities

Ambulance Services are provided by the County Council under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

A Congregational Schoolroom in Witham Road is utilised every Wednesday morning as a Child Welfare Centre and Minor Ailments Clinic, under the direction of Dr. J. Willins and Nurse Bodley of the Lancashire County Council. An Immunisation Clinic is held on the fourth Wednesday afternoon in each month at 2-15 on the same premises by Dr. Willins.

HOSPITALS

There are no hospitals in the town.

The Ormskirk County Hospital and the Wigan Hospitals provide ample accommodation for all patients from Skelmersdale.

Infectious cases are admitted to the New Hall Isolation Hospital, Scarisbrick.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply

The township is supplied with water by the Southport and District Water Board.

Water is pumped from two boreholes some 750 feet deep at Scarth Hill into the adjoining water tower from which it gravitates through a 7 inch main to the district. This pumping station formerly belonged to the Council who sold it to the Southport and District Water Board in 1907. The district mains are still owned by the Council. It is very likely that many of these older mains will be badly corroded owing to the constantly acid nature of the water and the large amount of free carbon dioxide it carries. The water supply is, however, of the highest standard of organic and bacterial purity. Steps are being taken to renew the old lengths of mains.

Due to the Council's post-war building programme and modernisation of existing old houses, the pressure in the higher parts

of the town is poor at certain periods of the week. The Council are negotiating with the Southport and District Water Board to consider the question of an improvement in supply. Agreement has been reached to install a booster pump on the 7 inch supply mains to improve the pressure in the higher parts of the town.

Sewage Disposal

The district is sewered on the partly separate system. The sewage from approximately 1,800 houses is discharged by gravity through a 24 inch outfall sewer at the Council's Berry Street Disposal Works, and that from approximately 350 houses, by a 15 inch outfall sewer at the Pennyland Works.

Sewage from a small number of houses in the Stormy Area is discharged into settling tanks at the rear of Summer Street.

The sewage at Berry Street is treated by settlement and land irrigation, and is in urgent need of modernisation.

The sewage at Pennyland is treated by sedimentation and filtration and considerable improvement has been made in the quality of the effluent.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION

- Privy Middens — 8. Number of closets attached to these middens — 12.
Number of pail closets — 61.
Number of dry ashpits (excluding middens) — Nil.
Number of moveable ashbins — 2,118.
Number of houses on water carriage system — 2,054.
Number of water closets (including schools, etc.) — 2,127.

HOUSING

Number of New Houses erected during the year:

- | | |
|---|----|
| (i) By the Local Authority | 30 |
| (ii) By other Local Authorities | — |
| (iii) By other bodies or persons | 24 |

1 Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected formally or informally for housing defect (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 671 |
| (b) Number of inspections, formal or informal made for the purpose | 1,701 |
| (2) Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation and not capable at reasonable expense of being rendered fit: | |
| (a) Number found during the year | 17 |
| (b) Number (or estimated number) at end of year .. | 250 |

- (3) Number of dwelling houses found during the year to be not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, but capable of being rendered fit 71

2. Clearance Areas (Housing Act, 1957)

- (1) Number of dwelling houses demolished during the year:
- (a) Unfit houses Nil
- (b) Other houses Nil
- (2) Number of persons displaced 4

3. Houses not included in Clearance Areas:

- (1) Houses demolished or closed during year.

Housing Act, 1957:—

- (i) Demolished as a result of formal or informal procedure (Section 11)

No. of	
Houses	Persons Displaced
3	2
3	—
—	—

- (ii) Closed in pursuance of an undertaking given by owners under Section 11 and still in force

- (iii) Parts of building closed (Section 12)

- (2) Repairs during the year:—

- (a) Unfit houses rendered fit and houses in which defects were remedied during the period as a result of informal action by the Local Authority under the Housing or Public Health Acts 385

- (b) Public Health Acts—action after service of formal notice—Houses in which defects were remedied:—

- (i) By Owners 31

- (ii) By Local Authority in default of owners ... 1

- (c) Housing Act, 1936—action after service of formal notice (Sections 9, 10, 11 and 16). Houses made fit:—

- (i) By Owners Nil

- (ii) By Local Authority in default of owners ... Nil

- (d) Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954:—

- Houses reconstructed, enlarged or improved and Demolition Orders revoked (Section 5) Nil

4. Unfit Houses in temporary use (Housing Act, 1957)

(1) Number of houses at end of year retained for temporary accommodation and approved for grant under Section 7 Nil

(2) Number of separate dwellings contained in (1) above Nil

(3) Number of houses at end of year licensed for temporary occupation (Section 6) Nil
5. House Purchase and Housing Act, 1958 — Improvement Grants, etc.:

Action during the year — Application approved 7

INFECTIOUS DISEASE STATISTICS

	Smallpox	Enteric Fever	Scarlet Fever	Measles	Diphtheria	Puerperal Pyrexia	Erysipelas	Whooping Cough	Pneumonia	Para-Typhoid Fever	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Acute Poliomyelitis	Dysentery
Cases	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The number of children who have completed a full course of Immunisation during the year ended 31st December, 1959, is as follows:

Children between the ages 0 — 4 years 89, and children between the ages of 5 — 15 years 4, making a total of 93.

There has been no incidence or mortality from Diphtheria during the past ten years.

SCARLET FEVER

**Table showing incidence and mortality from Scarlet Fever
1950-1959**

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Cases	1	1	—	7	1	—	—	—	2	1
Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases and mortality during 1959

Age Periods		New Cases				Deaths			
		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
				M	F			M	F
0— 1	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1— 5	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—10	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—15	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20—25	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
45—55	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS		—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
		—		1		—		—	

Dispensary and sanatorium treatment for Tuberculosis is administered by the appropriate department of the Lancashire County Council.

The following table shows the number, monthly distribution and nature of cases of Infectious Diseases coming under the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during 1959

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTALS	REMOVED TO HOSPITAL
ANTHRAX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SMALLPOX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SCARLET FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
DIPHTHERIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ENTERIC FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PARA-TYPHOID FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ACUTE PNEUMONIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PUERPERAL PYREXIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MALARIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DYSENTERY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MEASLES	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—
WHOOPIING COUGH	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ERYSIPELAS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1959

Notifiable Diseases	Total Cases at all ages	Under 1 Year	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED													HOSPITAL	
			YEARS													Total Deaths belonging to district	Total Cases removed to Hospital
			1—	2	3	4	5	5—10	10—15	15—20	20—35	35—45	45—65	65 and upwards			
SMALLPOX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
SCARLET FEVER ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
DIPHTHERIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
ENTERIC FEVER ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
PARA-TYPHOID FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
PUERPERAL PYREXIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
ERYSIPELAS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
POLIOMYELITIS . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
ACUTE PNEUMONIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
MEASLES	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
WHOOPIING COUGH	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
FOOD POISONING ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
DYSENTERY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
ANTHRAX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
NON-PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	
TOTALS	4	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	

Factories Acts, 1937 to 1959

1. INSPECTIONS

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notice	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	3	3	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	23	28	1	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	—	—	—	—
Total	26	31	1	

2. DEFECTS FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness (Sect. 1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (Sect. 2) .	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (Sect. 4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floor (Sect. 6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (Sect. 7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	1	—	—	—

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR 1959

The year was noteworthy for the introduction of the standard improvement grants which will prove most useful in Skelmersdale. Grants were being made towards the end of the year and it is hoped that owners will take advantage of this opportunity of modernising their property.

The Council brought a successful action under the Prevention of Damage by Pests (Threshing and Dismantling of Ricks) Regulations, 1950. — the first case heard at Ormskirk under these Regulations. It was subsequently noted that farmers were observing the regulations and in one instance more than 90 rats were killed during threshing. The considerable reduction in the rat population in Skelmersdale area is to the benefit of the health of the public. It has been established that rats entering food stores constitute a grave hazard from the food poisoning aspect.

HOUSING

(a) Improvement

Seven applications for standard improvement grants were approved during the year.

(b) Repairs

Further progress was made on making up the leeway on the repairs to rented houses, which arose because of the last war. It would appear that the Rent Act, 1957, offers a greater incentive to owners than did the Housing Repairs and Rents Act of 1954.

Three nuisance orders were obtained at the Ormskirk County Magistrates Court in June

(c) Slum Clearance

Twenty demolition orders were made during the year.

Three houses were demolished during the year.

FOOD

(a) Premises

Occupiers are maintaining their premises in satisfactory condition. One grocery shop was refitted during the year.

(b) Unsound Food

The following report has been submitted by the Lancashire surrendered by food retailers :—

Food	Weight
Tinned Ox Tongue	6 lbs.
Tinned Beef	2½ lbs.
Tinned Ham	39¼ lbs.
Tinned Pork Luncheon Meat	2 lbs.
Tinned Fish	2½ lbs.
Tinned Soup	1 lbs.
Tinned Vegetables	2¼ lbs.
Tinned Fruit	13½ lbs.
Tinned Milk	2¾ lbs.

(c) Adulteration of Food

The following report has been submitted by the Lancashire County Council, whose Sampling Officer took the following samples for analysis by the County Analyst.

A total of 31 samples was obtained, consisting of 16 samples of milk, and 15 others comprising :—

1 Lard	1 Black pudding
3 Butter	1 Pork sausages
4 Cooking Fat	1 Beef sausages
3 Vegetables, canned	1 Cornflour

All above samples were reported by the Analyst to be genuine.

The Analyst gave an adverse report on the following sample :—
1 Milk. Contained a small dead fly weighing 9 milligrammes. The dairy concerned was notified.

DAIRIES

There is only one registered dairy, and this has been maintained in a satisfactory condition.

Milk Retailers Licences

The following licences were issued during the year :—

Tuberculin Tested	7
Pasteurised	7
Sterilised	18

Milk Sampling

The following samples were submitted for examination :—

Grade	Test	Samples	Satisfactory
T.T. Raw	T.B.	1	1
T.T. Raw	Methylene Blue	1	1
Pasteurised	Methylene Blue	3	3
Pasteurised	Phosphatase	3	3

ICE CREAM

Two new premises were registered during the year for the sale of ice cream. There are now 23 registered premises.

All retailers maintained their premises in a satisfactory condition during the year, and each have satisfactory washing facilities, including a constant supply of hot water.

5 ice-cream samples were submitted for analysis and all were reported satisfactory.

RODENT CONTROL

As already indicated, a closer watch was kept on the fencing of ricks prior to the threshing at farms after 1st November, when the build-up of the rat population at farms commences. The fencing regulations are now being observed in the Skelmersdale area, thereby preventing the spread of rodent infestation into surrounding areas.

Routine inspections for the destruction of rats and mice were carried out, and treatment done by the part-time Rodent Operator. Private premises were treated free of cost, and a charge made for business premises, using "Warfarin." No major infestations were discovered.

Maintenance treatment for the destruction of rats in sewers were carried out in March and September, using alternatively the poisons Zinc Phosphide and Arsenic. There is no serious re-infestation of the sewers.

Attention was paid to the control of infestation at the Council's Sewage Works and Refuse Tip.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

This service is carried out under the supervision of the Public Health Inspector. A Karrier Diesel-driven 10 cubic yard freighter is used for the purpose.

Dustbins and pail closets are emptied weekly and privy middens as often as possible.

8 middens serving 12 houses remain in the outlying areas. All these houses are scheduled for demolition.

SALVAGE

Waste paper is collected and placed in sacks on the back of the freighter.

15 tons 18 cwt were sold during the year, the value being £98/18/0d.

SHOPS

There are 106 shops on the register, and 208 visits were made during the year.

Duties under the Shops Act, 1950, relating to the employment of young persons, washing facilities, etc., were carried out on behalf of the County Council.

SCHOOLS

The new secondary school, opened during the year, has an excellent school kitchen and satisfactory sanitary accommodation.

The dinner service rooms and sanitary accommodation at each of the other four schools have been inspected.

Defects found in relation to the rooms used for the service of meals were notified to the Education Authority and improvements have been carried out or are in hand.

Three of the schools still lack a constant supply of hot water to the wash-hand basins.

FACTORIES

Routine visits have been made to the factories in the district and any defects found, remedied without the service of formal notices.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

A number of visits have been made to 5 factories with boiler houses in the district. In 2 instances it was necessary to bring the attention of the management to a smoke nuisance, and the emission of smoke has been considerably reduced.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Number of dwelling houses inspected under Public Health and Housing Acts	671
Number of inspections made for above purposes	1,701
Visits to factories and work places	34
Visit to food premises	98
Visits re infectious diseases	1
Visits to schools	10
Visits to licensed premises	18
Visits to shops	208
Visits to hawkers' vehicles	14
Visits re rodent control	60
Visits re bacteriological samples of milk	4
Number of preliminary notices served	310
Number of preliminary notices complied with	267
Number of statutory notices served	61
Number of statutory notices complied with	58
Number of nuisance orders obtained	3

W. S E P H T O N L T D.
:: Printers ::
11/13 Duke Street, St. Helens

